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## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Housing Partners Offer First Ever Hispanic Housing Conference in Tennessee**

**NASHVILLE** – Tennessee is taking the lead by offering the first ever Hispanic Homeownership Conference of its kind—anywhere! The inaugural Hispanic Homeownership Conference will be a one-day event held at the Radisson-Opryland in Nashville on April 3, 2003. The conference titled “New Neighbors: Opening Your Doors to the Hispanic Community,” is designed to bring together bankers, realtors, nonprofit organizations and government agencies from across the state to examine ways affordable housing and homeownership can be accessed by the growing Hispanic population in Tennessee.

Mayor Bill Purcell will open the conference with a welcome to Nashville. Featured speakers for the conference are from across the nation, who have significant experience in developing affordable housing markets and lending models for Hispanics in their respective communities. Highlights from the conference consist of presentations by Gilbert Gonzalez, Deputy under Secretary for Policy and Planning for Rural Development, USDA; and Lawrence Harrington, Former Executive Director for the United States at the Inter-American Development Bank.

The event is being cosponsored by a combination of partners from Federal, State, nonprofit organizations and private sector companies: Federal Reserve Bank (FRB), Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), Fannie Mae, USDA Rural Development, Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA), First Tennessee Latino Economic Task Force, Conexion America, Hispanic Marketing Inc., Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc., United Housing of Memphis, and SunTrust Bank.

"We wanted to be a part of this conference because increasing homeownership opportunity for minorities is a major component of Fannie Mae's American Dream Commitment," said Ralph Perrey, director of Fannie Mae's Tennessee Partnership Office. "Last year, Fannie Mae provided financing for 394,000 Hispanic families nationally, and we want to work closely with Tennessee lenders who are reaching out to Tennessee's rising number of Hispanic residents."

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**Tennessee Housing Development Agency  
404 James Robertson Parkway, Suite 1114  
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"The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta is proud to partner with the Tennessee Housing Development Agency in this important event. We recognize the rapid growth of Hispanics moving into Tennessee and support this Housing Conference as well as other initiatives that help address challenges and identify opportunities in providing mainstream financial products and services in the communities that we serve," said Community Affairs Officer, Juan Sanchez.

Mary Ruth Tackett, State Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development said, "Rural Development is pleased to be a partner in the first Hispanic Housing Conference in Tennessee. It is our hope this conference will bring together the banking, lending, realtor, and non-profit organizations to explore ways to increase affordable housing to our Hispanic population."

"This is a great opportunity for us to learn more about our Hispanic neighbors to help us ensure that the THDA programs are accessible to all eligible residents," said Janice Myrick, Executive Director for THDA.

For more information regarding the Hispanic conference contact Don Harris, THDA's Deputy Executive Director at 615-741-2400. Conference details, speaker information and registration forms can also be accessed on the THDA web site at [www.tennessee.gov/thda](http://www.tennessee.gov/thda)

## **Notes to Editor**

The Agency has a 19-member board of directors appointed from various sectors of the housing industry, with the state government being represented by the Governor's office, the Commission of Finance & Administration and the Constitutional Officers: Secretary of State, State Treasurer and Comptroller of the Treasury.

In 1973, the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) was created by the Tennessee General Assembly. The purpose: address the housing needs of low and moderate income Tennesseans.

THDA has helped over 80,000 first-time homebuyers realize the ultimate "American Dream," through the single-family mortgage program

THDA has issued over \$4.8 billion in bonds to finance mortgages.

The Agency has also helped over 5,400 Tennesseans with its Section 8 Rental Assistance Program and 27,900 project based Section 8 units are administered by THDA.

THDA has helped construct or rehab 5,811 units of affordable housing with the HOME Grant Program.

Helped build over 24,000 affordable multi-family units over the years due to THDA's administration of the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, as well as the Agency's efforts in sharing its tax-exempt bonding authority, which adds another 5,903 units.

The Agency has also created special programs that have been nationally recognized, such as the Bicentennial Neighborhoods Initiative in the late 1990's.

The Agency has been a financial success as well, doing a public mission without the use of state tax dollars. Through prudent financial management and investments, THDA has been and continues to be self-supporting.

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